U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNAIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ANNOUNCEMENT

CALL FOR PUBLIC-PRIVATE ALLIANCE PROPOSALS RELATED TO THE
Afghans Building Capacity Higher Education Alliances
UNDER EXISTING
ANNUAL PROGRAM STATEMENT
APS No: M/OAA/GRO/EGAS – 06 - 107

This program is authorized in accordance with Part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended.

USAID/Afghanistan's Office of Program and Project Development would like to make a special call for the **submission of concept papers related to the Strategic Objective 4, Cross-cutting Program Support Systems, focusing on building the capacity of the higher education institutions throughout Afghanistan.**

Capacity building is a high priority of the Government of Afghanistan and integral to the new USAID Country Strategy. The university system in Afghanistan suffers from twenty five years of conflict, lack of basic infrastructure, faculty and staff reliant on decades-old teaching materials and techniques and students that are unprepared to participate in an effective university program. The GoA has instituted some important programs to support the restructuring of the universities. These include the Public Administration Reform (PAR) program and the newly developed Strategic Plan for Kabul University. This latter plan calls for the restructuring of faculty and staff, language of instruction, quality of performance, facilities development and other topics related to strengthening the ability of the university to produce the graduates needed by the Afghan economy. The strategic planning process implemented by Kabul University is expected to be replicated in many of the remaining Afghan universities over the next two years.

USAID seeks to develop alliances that bring innovative approaches, promising measurable impact to support the core results of the USAID and GoA capacity building efforts at the university level. These core results include:

- Identifying and promoting bilateral, multilateral, and private sector collaboration to strengthen schools and departments of Afghan universities in specific sectors such as Agriculture and Veterinary Science, Law and Sharia, Engineering, Computer Science, Management, Public Policy and Public Administration, and the like;
- Identifying and promoting bilateral, multilateral, and private sector collaboration to strengthen cross-cutting support programs such Digital Libraries, English as a Second Language, Technology-supported education (eLearning), Facilities Management and the like

Proponents are encouraged to propose alliances that provide a "holistic" approach, addressing program description, curriculum, course content, teaching materials, pedagogical methods, lab structures and equipment, service learning and internships, etc.

Proponents are further encouraged to propose alliances that address the development needs of the university system as a whole, including Kabul-based universities (Kabul University and Kabul Education, Kabul Medical and Kabul Polytechnic universities) and the 14 universities based in the provinces.

Project proposals that address these core activities in USAID/Afghanistan's core capacity building effort may be submitted under USAID's Annual Program Statement (APS) No. M/OAA/GRO/EGAS-06-107.

USAID/Afghanistan will be responsible for the proposal review process and management of the award process. Applicants are required to submit short concept papers to USAID/Afghanistan. Applicants will receive instructions on whether or not to proceed with a full proposal. Technical comments provided on the concept paper should guide the submission of the full proposal.

The university alliances programs may be submitted for a five-year period. **Although proposals for funding during the current fiscal year must be submitted before the close of the fiscal year on September 30, 2006, those parties interested are encouraged to submit proposals before January 31, 2006 for the first round of reviews.** Proposals submitted after September will require submission under the 2007 APS.

For information regarding guidelines and procedures to submit a concept paper, please refer to the 2006 Annual Program Statement APS) posted by the USAID Global Development Alliance (GDA) Secretariat**.** The APS can be found at the following website: www.usaid.gov/gda.

Before submitting a concept paper we encourage applicants to speak with key technical staff involved in the USAID/Afghanistan capacity building program. These staff can inform you whether or not your idea is appropriate to the country and aligned with USAID/Afghanistan goals. For USAID/Afghanistan, the contact person is Lane Smith, Team Leader, SO 4, (lasmith@usaid.gov). Lane Smith is located in Kabul, Afghanistan, GMT+4:30 or EST+9:30.